

1722. -1183 1681
Of Publick Baptism.

A
SERMON

Preach'd before the
Right Honourable

THE
LORD-MAYOR,

AND THE
Court of Aldermen,

AT
Guild-Hall-Chapel, SUNDAY,
Novemb. 20. 1692.

The Fourth Edition; with a Postscript.

By PHILIP STUBS, M. A. Rector of St. James
Garlick-Hythe; and Chaplain to the Right Ho-
nourable THEOPHILUS, Earl of Huntingdon.

L O N D O N :

Printed by Henry Hills, in Black-fryars, near the
Water side. For the Benefit of the Poor. 1708.

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FLEET, Major.

Martis *vj*, Die Decembris, 1692. *Annoq; Regis & Reginae,*
Willielmi & Mariæ, Angl' &c. *Quarto.*

THis Court doth desire Mr. *Stubs* to Print his Sermon, Preached at *Guild-Hall-Chapel*, on *Sunday* the 20th Day of *November*, before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of this City.

GOODFELLOW.

Imprimatur.

Decemb. 9.
1692.

Guil. Lancaster, R. P. D. Henrico
Episc. Lond. a sacris Domesticis.

To the Right Honourable
Sir JOHN FLEET, Knight,
Lord Mayor of the City of London,
And to the Court of Aldermen.

Right Honourable,

THE unexpected Success this plain Discourse (by the Blessing of God) met with from a kind Auditory in this City, (for whose private Benefit 'twas not long since, I must confess, but too hastily drawn up;) as it prompted me at first to offer it before the most Publick Assembly therein at Guild-Hall-Chapel, so the Hopes of its farther Usefulness makes me now readily comply with Your Honour's Commands for its Publication, in order thereunto. That it may have its design'd Effect, in contributing (tho' never so little) to the Retrieving so Ancient, so Universal, so Religious, I may say, so necessary a Practice, as is the Subject Matter of it; and, by Consequence, to the farther Promoting of God's Glory, in the greater Good of his Church in general, and the Welfare of particular Christians, is the Hearty Desire of,

Right Honourable,

Your most Humble,

Most Obedient Servant,

PHIL. STUBS.

To my Beloved PARISHIONERS, the Inhabitants of St. James Garlick-Hythe.

Dear Friends, and Neighbours :

IT having pleased Almighty God, the Sovereign Disposer of the World, to place me in his *good Providence* amongst you with the *Care* of your Souls, by the *Right Reverend Father in God*, the Lord Bishop of this *Diocese*, my much Honoured Lord and Patron ; That I may be faithful in the discharge of so *weighty* a *Trust* committed to me by my *Great Master in Heaven*, and my *immediate Superior upon Earth*, and of which I shall give up an account, I hope, *with Joy, and not with Grief*, which wou'd be *unprofitable for you* ; I take this first opportunity of apprizing you, That the *earliest* of my *Cares* shall be exerted about the most *momentous Administrations* of the *Holy Sacraments*, those Means of Grace, by which, through the Divine Institution, we are made partakers of the Hopes of Glory ; Accordingly having already intimated from the *Pulpit*, that the *Holy Sacraments* are then *rightly* and *duly* Administred, when the one is as *frequent*, the other as *publick* as may be ; and having promising Assurances given me on my unexpected Appearance amongst you of many *constant Communicants* at the *Holy Altar*, I now make it my Earnest Request to you from the *Press*, That the *Font* be never shamefully deserted by any of you, as 'tis in too many Churches, but that your Children may be there *dedicated* to the Lord in the most acceptable manner, as you your selves seem resolved to tender to the most High God a *reasonable Service* ; That *Publick Baptism* is the *rational Administration*, and most agreeable to the Will of our Blessed Saviour, is, I hope, fully made out in the *Publication*, which I now put into your Hands, in order to your ready compliance therewith, or my Answering your *Objections*, if any can be made against it. 'Tis now Eight Years and upwards, since I have met with *none* in a Parish *larger* than yours, which could obviate an intire Success as to the regular practise of this Christian Usage ; and I am confident I may expect better things from you, who have a Character for being *kind* to your Ministers in their own concerns, than that ye should be *unkind* to me in this Affair which so nearly concerns the Honour of my Great Master ; or, That ye would any of you deny me that *Liberty of Conscience*, which every one challenges as of right for Himself :

That God would therefore direct your Judgments *aright* in this and all other Religious Matters ; That ye may all be conformable to His Will from the *Cradle* to the *Grave* ; doing nothing through the Course of your Lives but what is *well-pleasing in his sight*, that so ye may at length obtain the End of your Hopes, the Salvation of your precious and immortal Souls ; as it shall be the hearty Endeavor, 'tis the unfeigned Prayer, of

Sion-College, Aug.
23. 1708.

Your affectionate Friend and
Servant for Christ's sake,

Ph. Stubs.

St. MATTH. XXVIII. 19.

Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations ; Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

THE Text is a full Commission, deliver'd out by our Saviour to his Apostles, when he had just finish'd the glorious Work of our Redemption, and was now Ascending up again unto his Father ; whereby he impowers them to extend the benefits of his Passion by *Baptism*, as far as he design'd they should reach, even to the utmost Parts of the Earth : For as he himself had spent his whole time in *Judea*, and the Regions thereabout, amongst the *Jews*, God's peculiar People ; so he commands them, whom he had fully instructed in every Particular of his Doctrine, to communicate it to the *Gentiles* :

Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations ; Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

From which Words, I may take Occasion to speak of these Five Heads.

- I. Of the Nature of *Baptism* in general.
- II. Of the Persons here authoriz'd to *Baptize*.
- III. Of the Persons to be *Baptiz'd*.
- IV. Of the Form of *Baptism*. And,
- Lastly, Of the Time and Place, when and where this Sacrament ought to be administred.

Of the Four first (there being no difference about them, either as to Principle or Practice, amongst those of our Communion) I shall say little more at present, than what may serve by way of Introduction, as it were, to the last Particular, which I have design'd for the main Subject of my ensuing Discourse : Wherein I shall, with all the Brevity and Plainness I can, endeavour to demonstrate the Unreasonableness of continuing that corrupt Custom crept in among us, (and which of late Years has prevail'd more especially in this City,) of *Baptizing Children in Private Houses*, contrary to the earnest,

pious Desires and Endeavours of our Clergy, the declared Sense and Usage of the Catholick Church all along, the express Orders and Constitutions of that sound Part of it, whereof we boast our selves Members, and the very Reason and Design of the Institution it self; to the no small Dishonour of God Almighty, in hindring the greater Promotion of his Glory, and the Edification of many Religious, well-disposed Christians.

But before I enter professedly upon this Argument, I am to speak a Word or Two briefly on the Four just mentioned Heads. And,

I. Of the Nature of *Baptism* in general.

Now *Baptism* signifies properly an Immersion, Dipping or Washing the whole Body in Water; and was a Ceremony used among the *Heathens*, as well as the *Jews*, upon the Admission of any new Converts to their Religion: By which Washing was signified, the Cleansing of the Persons so Baptized, from their former Pollutions; and their Resolution of continuing Pure and Unspotted for the future. This Ceremony, being very innocent, and very significant, the *Holy Jesus* was willing to continue it in his Church; leaving out the other of *Circumcision*, which signified but the same thing, and was more injurious to Men's Health, and to their Modesty.

I say, *Baptism* signifies properly an Immersion, Dipping, or Washing the whole Body in Water: And so it was practis'd in the Primitive Times, after the manner of *John's Baptism*, who chose the River *Jordan*, and such Places, where there was much Water, for the convenience of such an Immersion: For so it is expressly said of him, That *John was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much Water there*, St. Joh. 3. 23. After this manner the Eunuch, in *Acts* 8. was baptized by St. Philip; for 'tis said, *They went down both into the Water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him*, *Acts* 8. 38. And indeed, this Dipping all over in Water is thought by some, more significant than any other sort of *Baptism*; for hereby is denoted the Cleansing the whole Man from Sin, the being buried with Christ in *Baptism*, which is signified by the Immersion, or Dipping in Water; and the Rising to a Newness to Life, which is signified by the Emerision, or Rising out of it again. But yet it is not so necessary, but it may be omitted in favour of the Weakness of the Person to be baptiz'd,

tiz'd, and the Pouring or Sprinkling of Water us'd instead of it ; as has been the Practice of these *Northern Countries*, in the *Baptism* of Children, whose tender Bodies cannot endure a total Immersion ; and of the first Ages of the Church, in favour of Sick and Bed-ridden Persons, who desir'd to become Christians. For, as God Almighty is tender of our Souls, so he takes care of our Bodies too ; and his Laws are so far from injuring our Healths, that they highly improve them : Upon which Account, it is not to be imagin'd, that the Ceremony of Admission into the Christian Religion should be more difficult, than that into the Jewish Covenant ; or that Children should be oblig'd to become *Martyrs*, as soon as they are made *Profelytes*.

But here it may be started, That, admitting this Washing, Dipping, or Sprinkling to be the Ceremony of my Admission into Covenant with Christ, How doth it hence appear, that Christ thereby enters into Covenant with me ? I may be washed indeed with Water ; But how shall I be satisfied that Christ washes me with his Holy Spirit ? For the satisfying of which Objection, I must proceed to the Second Thing I design'd to speak of, *viz.*

II. The Persons here authoriz'd to Baptize.

Whom, if we look back to *Ver. 16.* of this Chapter, we shall find to be the *Apostles* : *Then the Eleven Disciples* (for so the *Apostles* are there call'd) *went away into Galilee, into a Mountain where Jesus had appointed them, St. Matth. 28. 16.* Who, when he came amongst them, spake unto them, saying, *All Power is given unto me, in Heaven, and in Earth : Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them, &c. Ver. 18, 19.* As if he had said, My Father has left the Government of this World, which I have redeemed with my Blood, to me ; I have power to make what Covenants I please with Mankind ; I have told you, upon what Conditions I will confer Heaven and Happiness upon Men ; Go ye therefore, and let them all know it ; And I give you power, and none but you, to admit them into this my New Covenant by Baptism. But then, the Mercy of God, as it was willing to extend the Benefits of his Passion beyond that Age of the World, and that Generation of Men, contrived Means for the effectual Continuance of this Power of making such Covenants to the End of the World, by authorizing the *Apostles* to delegate and depute their Power to others, in this large and plenary Commission, *As my Father*
bath

*hath sent me, even so I send you, St. Joh. 20. 21. I give you the same Authority, which I have receiv'd; And as I had Power of my Father to send you forth to preach the Gospel, and baptize every Creature; so I give you Power to send others forth with the same Commission, to Ordain Bishops, Priests and Deacons, as you shall judge expedient for the Edifying and Welfare of my Church. Which Power was accordingly delegated, immediately afterwards, to seven Persons at once, as you'll find in Acts 6. 3. to Saul and Barnabas, chap. 13. 3. to their Successors, until this very Period of Time; wherein we of this Communion, have Persons under the several Characters above-mention'd, who derive their Authority from them, by an uninterrupted Succession. For no Man can take this Authority upon himself; and unless there were Sacred Persons so continu'd in the Church, there could, at this Day, be no Legal or Valid Administration of this Sacrament; and by Consequence, our Saviour's Command would have long since fell to the Ground, (which I tremble to think of,) when he bid them, and, in them, their Successors, *Go and teach all Nations, baptizing them, &c.* The Meaning of which Words, *All Nations*, or an Enquiry,*

III. Into the *Persons* to be *Baptiz'd*, is the Subject of my Third General, which now offers it self to be spoke to; *Go ye therefore and teach All Nations, baptizing them, &c.*

The Lord God had, for a long time, dwelt only in *Judea*: Though the vast Circle of the Earth, nor the larger Circumference of the *Heavens* cannot contain him, 2 Chron. 2. 6. yet, as the *Psalmist* expresses it, *at Salem was his Tabernacle, and his Dwelling at Sion*, Psal. 76. 2. There was his House, there his peculiar Residence. To the People of *Israel* only had he given his Laws, and order'd the manner of his Worship: The rest of the World seem'd over-look'd and neglected, like Children dis-inherited, and banish'd from their Father's Presence: But when the *Blessed Jesus*, the Word of God, by whom all Men were created, descended, for the Redemption of them all, he threw down the Partition-Wall which shut out the *Gentiles* from the Sight and Favour of God, and contriv'd Means for the Bringing them into his Family. He caus'd the Waters of *Baptism* to extend themselves, as far as those of the *Universal Deluge*; that as all Men had once *perish'd* by Water, so they should all be *saved* by it.

Nor do we, when we say *All Men only* (upon slight Grounds) exclude the Children of Believers from this extraordinary Privilege, as do the Adversaries to *Infant-Baptism*: Who should not have been mention'd in this place, (since their wild Opinion runs counter to the Belief and Practice of the Universal Church in all Ages,) did not some of them boast of an Irrefragable Argument on their Side, taken from the very Words we are now about; arguing from hence, that because our Saviour first said *Teach*, before he said *Baptize*, therefore every Body must be taught, before he is baptiz'd. To which there need be given no other Answer, but what the true Meaning of the Original Word will readily furnish us with: For, *μαθητεύσατε*, in the Greek, signifies not here *Teach*, as in our Translation; but rather, *make Disciples of*: As if our Saviour (alluding to a known † Custom among the Jews) had said, Go and admit into my Church, and *make Disciples of* all Nations, and that by the Ceremony of *Baptism*; for (which is very remarkable) in the very next Verse, where the Word *Teaching* comes again, there is another * Word made use of in the Original, which has that * *διδάσκοντες*. for its proper signification. An Exposition, which, if it were duly attended to, might be of no small Use to unprejudic'd Anabaptists. As,

IV. The Form of *Baptism* here prescribed, *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Ghost*, might be so to another sort of seemingly more Rational Persons, who yet (some of them) make a Difficulty in Founding the Doctrine of the Individual and Ever-Blessed Trinity upon express Words of Scripture.

For, if the being baptiz'd into *the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, as the Original imports, *Εἰς τὸ ὄνομα*, and not *in the Name*, according to our Translation, which is less significant; It, *V. Grot. sup. loc.* I say, the being baptiz'd into those Names doth not signify, the being baptiz'd into the Belief of Three Persons in one Incomprehensible Godhead, which distinguishes the *Christian Baptism* from all others; and the submitting all the Faculties of our Souls and Bodies to the Sovereign Dominion and Guidance of each of them, as such; then

† *Inter Judæos Discipuli facti sunt ii, non qui jam docti sunt, sed ideo Discipuli facti sunt, ut doceantur.* Lightfoot: *Hor. Heb. ad locum.*

the whole Church almost has been in an Error for nigh these 1700 Years, and a Handful of Men, whose Business it is now-a-days to revive old, condemn'd *Heresies*, are alone in the Right.

Thus have I briefly gone through the Four first Particulars, which relate to the *Essentials* of *Baptism*: To all and singular of which, every one in our Communion is so ready to subscribe, against all *Anabaptists*, *Socinians*, and other *Unorthodox* Persons whatever, that few would forgive themselves, should their Children by any means happen to be otherwise baptized than by *Sprinkling them with Water*, according to the Usage of our Country, and not by Dipping them all over in it; should they not be baptiz'd by a *Lawfully Ordain'd Minister* of the Church of England; and that too, *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*.

V. But now, as to the *Circumstances* of *Time* and *Place*, when and where this *Sacrament* ought to be Administred, which is my Fifth Particular, and comes now to be consider'd more at large.

Most are so prejudic'd against them, by a prevailing Custom to the contrary, that, notwithstanding our Rule tells us, * *It ought not to be done, but upon Sundays, or Holy-days; nor Out of the Church, † unless in Cases of great Necessity*: They think these Matters of no such Importance, but that they may safely pass them by, and Christen their Children at Home, when there is no Cause for it, without the least Contravention to my Text, or any other place of Scripture.

To Persons of which Complexion, I answer,

First, That although this Text is not strictly producible for *Publick Baptism*, as it means *Baptism* at the *Font*, according to the particular Constitution of our Church, Can. & Const. which provides, That *there shall be a Font of Eccles. Can. 81. Stone in every Church or Chapel, where Baptism is to be Administred; and that, in that Font only, the Minister shall Baptize* publicly: Yet (with their Leaves) it may be urg'd for it, as far as the Design of the Institution it self will warrant us, and the early and constant Custom of the Church of Christ, which is the best Expofitor of such a Design.

* *Rub. 1.* before the Office for Publick Baptism.

† *Rub. 2.* before the Office for Private Baptism.

Now that Baptism, even from the Church's Infancy, has been all along as publickly celebrated, as the present State of that did permit, may be fairly gather'd from the following Words of a great Searcher into the Records of the Primitive Times; which shall serve instead of many Quotations that might be brought for the Proof of this Assertion. "The Place where this solemn Action was perform'd, was at first unlimited; any Place where there was Water, as * *Justin Martyr* tells us: In Ponds or Lakes, in Springs or Rivers, as † *Tertulian* speaks: But always, as near as might be, to the place of the *Publick Assemblies*; for it was seldom done without the Presence of the Congregation. And then,

Dr. Cave in his Prim. Christ.

part 1. c. 10.

* *Ap. 2. p. 93.*

† *De Bap. adv*

Quint. cap. 4.

Secondly, I answer further, That though the Text before us should not be sufficient of it self to satisfy all the bewildring Doubts of the Scrupulous, or Perverse, but, notwithstanding its Evidence, they will think themselves still at liberty to baptize either in publick or private; yet, in Consort with some others that may be alledg'd, it ought certainly to be thought of such Force, as to conclude them without more a-do, and immediately determine their Choice. Such are these, and the like Apostolical Canons: *Let all things be done decently, and in order*, 1 Cor. 14. 40. *Let all things be done to edifying*, v. 26. From which, and several other Places of Scripture of the same Nature, it is on all Hands acknowledg'd among Protestants, * That hereby is given to the Church Power to make Decrees about such Matters as this, and others design'd there, where St. Paul tells the *Corinthians*, † That *the rest he will set in order when he comes*. And we of this Church expressly assert, ‡ That *she has Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies, not repugnant to the Word of God*: And that the Bringing of Persons to be solemnly baptiz'd in God's House, for the general Good of the Christians there present, has no such Contrariety, must still be presum'd, till better Topicks for Conviction be found out, than what have hitherto been offer'd.

* Vide H. r. Conf. varias *Aug. Sc. Helv. Basil. Bohem. Belg. Sax. &c.*

† 1 Cor. 11. 34. ‡ Art. 20.

Now,

Now, this Power being granted, as lodg'd in the Church, it will hence follow, That what our Mother doth lawfully enjoin, we are, with Readiness and Submission to assent to; lest by standing out against her *obstinately*, we sin as much against Heaven, who gave her this Commission, as we do against the Authority of the Church it self.

However therefore some may stile themselves her Children, and seem mightily pleas'd with the specious Appellation of *True Sons of the Church of England*, whilst they are guilty of such an *Irregularity* as *Private Baptism* has been always reckon'd in it, (especially when required to the contrary,) they must pardon others who cannot but think them highly *unworthy* to be call'd so; since by such stubborn, undutiful Carriage, (were all Men as positive in their Refusals as they,) her Being must (inevitably) be destroy'd as a *Church*, whence every one of us derive our own, as *Christians*.

But, to be more methodical, and to press this Matter with greater Application, let me crave your Patience, whilst I tender to you the Four following Particulars.

1. The exprefs Orders of our Church, with relation to *Publick Baptism*, and the Care she has taken in the Contrivance of her *Form* for it, so, that there can be no Intrenchment upon it, without a great deal of Absurdity, as well as Disobedience on their side, who become *Despisers of the Church of God*, 1 Cor. 11. 22. by acting contrary to her Injunctions.

2. That the Obedience of her Genuine Sons in this Affair, may not be Nick-nam'd, or term'd Implicit, I shall shew, that she hath done nothing herein, but upon very extraordinary Motives; in that her Constitutions about it do not only bear a sweet Harmony to the Practice of the *Eastern*, and all the *Western Churches*: But,

3. That the Practice of all these Churches is grounded upon the earliest Antiquity: And,

4. That that Antiquity has no less solid a Basis, than the firmest Reasons to support it.

But of each of these as briefly as possible. And,

1. Then, As to the Orders of our Church: besides the Canon just now mention'd, where there is a *Font* enjoin'd to be set up in every Church or Chapel, where Baptism is to be Administred; and that in that Font only,

only; the Minister shall Baptize publickly; the Office for Publick Baptism saith in one place, *Rubrick 1st.*
That the People are to be admonish'd; that it is of that Office.

most convenient that Baptism should not be Administer'd, but upon Sundays, and Holy-days, when the most number of People come together. In another place it enjoins, That when there are Children to be baptiz'd, the Parents shall give notice thereof over Night, or in the Morning, before the Beginning of Morning-Prayer, to the Curate: And then, the Godfathers and Godmothers, and the People, with the Children, must be ready at the Font, either immediately after the Last Lesson at Morning-Prayer, or else immediately after the Last Lesson at Evening-Prayer; as the Curate, by his Discretion, shall appoint. Again, In the Office *Rubrick 2d.*

for Private Baptism, The Curates of every Parish shall often admonish their Parishioners, that, without great Cause and Necessity, they procure not their Children to be baptiz'd at home, in their Houses. Our Church is so indulgent a Mother, that she permits any to be baptiz'd in Private when there is a Necessity for it, agreeably to the Practice of the Universal Church all along; and accordingly hath provided a particular Form for such Exigencies: But this still with an Injunction, That afterwards they be brought to Church; that those Prayers and Rites, which before were omitted in the Office, may be there publickly supplied. *Rubrick 3d.*

Rubr. 5th.
in the Office for Private Bapt.

This is the Sence of our Church in this Matter, and her Determination, and therefore sufficient, as has been prov'd, to oblige every True Son of hers to acquiesce therein, and be conformable.

But I have yet farther to urge, That whosoever will be stubborn, and run counter to these Establishments of hers, by Christ'ning his Children at home, and that by the Publick Form, (which is still insisted upon,) must not only be reckon'd guilty of manifest Disobedience to his Mother, but is chargeable likewise with several gross Absurdities in one of the solemnest of God's holy Ordinances; the Publick Form being so contriv'd, to prevent Evasion, or Collusion herein, that it cannot properly be us'd any where but in the Church; as has been well observ'd in a late * Treatise on this Argument, to which hard-

* Mr. Arwaker's *Ministration of Publick Baptism of Infants to be used in the Church.*

* Pa. 29, &c.

ly any thing can be added to this Head. For, 1. For instance, as the Author observes, * When the Minister says thus to the Godfathers and Godmothers, *You have brought this Child here to be baptiz'd*, (according to that of one of the Ancients, † *You were brought to Church in the Arms of your Sureties*;) he ought, in a *Private House*, to invert the Words thus, *Ye have brought me here to baptize this Child*. 2. How can any Minister use that Petition in the last Collect, before the Prayer of Consecration, in such a place, with any colour of Reason, when he is thus to address himself to God Almighty, *Grant that whosoever is here dedicated unto thee, by our Office and Ministry, may be endued*, &c. whilst by *Here* is undoubtedly meant the *Font* in the Church, or the *Church* itself, the proper place of Dedication; at least, *Hannah* was of that Opinion, when she offer'd her *Samuel*, the Son of her Prayers, in the *House* of the *Lord*, 1 Sam. 1. 24. with a Design of Dedicating him there to his Service. 3. In the Prayer of Consecration it self, it is no small Argument to prevail for God's Assent to the Petitions offer'd in the behalf of the Child, to be Regenerated; That he would regard the Prayers of his Congregation, and comply therewith, in *Sanctifying the Water, to the Mystical Washing away of Sin*, &c. Now this Congregation, whose Prayers are thought thus efficacious, ought to be such an one, (as the above-cited Author observes,)

Pag. 31. of which the Minister may safely and truly say, *Thy Congregation*; for there is certainly the greatest Validity in the Prayers of God's Congregations: But there is great Reason to think, that those are not such, which are gather'd in a private House, on such an Account; since the Church has not appointed it a fit place for *Baptism*, unless, as was above-said, in Cases of extream Necessity. So that Private Houses being not ordinarily allow'd, much less commanded to be made use of as such; nay, oftentimes *perversely* appropriated by some, to that Use, against the express Authority of the Church, and earnest Sollicitation of those that are set over them; whoever assemble there, in such an illegal manner, must be thought as really guilty of a ‡ *Disorder* in the Church, as those who meet in prohibited Numbers and Places are of a *Riot* in the State. Nor

† *See Carnotens.* Serm. de Sacrament. Dedicat.

‡ Vid. *Bals. & Zen.* (apud Beveregium, Tom. I. p. 191.) ad Can. 31. Concil. 6. in Trullo.

will that pitiful Plea from our Saviour's (ignorantly misapply'd) Promise, *St. Matt. 18. 20. Where Two or Three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them*, stand them in any stead; Since we must not be allow'd to argue from extraordinary, to ordinary and common Cases; for though not a Tittle of our Saviour's Words shall fall to the Ground, but he will be with his all the World over, till the Consummation of all things; yet this Text must be understood of them, as duly circumstantiated, with respect to *Time, Place, &c.* Hence the Reason of no Considering Person will give him leave to say, Because our Saviour supported his Disciples with these Words, whom he foresaw Drooping, ere-long, under a Persecuted Condition; therefore they may make use of it upon every *Capricchio*, (as too many among our Laity actually do,) in the most flourishing State of the Church, against the known Orders of the Establishment in it, to which, in many the like Cases, they readily submit upon those very Motives which are usually urg'd for their Obedience to this Injunction. But, 4. The last Absurdity committed in using our Publick Form at *Home*, is, *the Receiving the Child*: When the Minister, having first Nam'd it, and Baptiz'd it, holding it still in his Hand, uses these Words of Admission, *We receive this Child into the Congregation of Christ's Flock, &c.* Which Reception doth not only mean, into the whole Body of the *Universal Church*, but as well that *Representative Part* then present, and Consenting to it for the Whole. And the Ministers Embracing the Child, is for the same End, as the Imposition of Hands in Baptism was of Old; which, *Durantus* tells us, signified the Reconciliation, by which he that was without the Church a Child of Wrath, according to our Catechism, was in the Church receiv'd into the Church's Favour, and made a Child of Grace.

*De Rit. Eccl.
Cath. Lib. 1.
cap. 19.*

Thus have I laid before you the Commands of our Church, with relation to Publick-Baptism, together with the Danger and Absurdity of our Breach of them; which was the first Particular: I hasten through the following ones with all imaginable Brevity, and proceed to shew,

2. That She has done nothing herein, but upon very extraordinary Motives, in that her Thoughts, with respect to the Business in hand, accord with the Eastern, and all the Western Churches now in the World.

As

As for the Eastern, Sir *Paul Ricaut*, in his *Present State of the Greek Church*, tells us, That *That hath from long Antiquity, practis'd, on the Eighth Day to present their Children at the Church-Porch, to receive the Blessing of the Priest, &c.* Chapter 7. And 'tis notoriously known, that the Practice of the

Vid. Rituale
jussu Pauli 5.
Colon. Edir.

Church of *Rome*, here in the West, is agreeable to her Constitutions : *Cum proprius locus hujus Sacramenti sit Ecclesia Parochialis, nullus extra eam, nisi forte in casu necessitatis baptizet.* Nor doth she permit any, but in Cases of extream

Necessity, to be baptiz'd at home ; and they, upon Recovery, are still brought to Church afterwards. The *French* (as well as the other Reform'd Churches abroad, conformable to which is their Practice (as many of them have Churches) in this City) not only order this Usage in their Service-Books, but, as we do, give their Reasons for it there likewise : *Because* * Baptism, say they, is a solemn Admission into the Church of Christ, and therefore ought to be done in the Face of the Assembly, who are to be Witnesses of the matter. Nay, The *English* Congregation which was gather'd at *Geneva*, in the year 1558. upon an unjust dislike of some things in our Liturgy and Church-Government here, † in their Form of Prayer, and Administration of Sacraments, approv'd by *J. Calvin* himself tells us positively, That it is evident from God's Word, that the Sacraments are not ordain'd of him, to be us'd in private Corners, as Charms or Sorceries ; but left to the Congregation, and necessarily annex'd to God's Word, as Seals of the same : Therefore the Infant, which is to be baptiz'd, shall be brought to Church on the day appointed, to Common-Prayer and Preaching, &c. And which I hope will be for the Conviction of those among us, who are very ready to charge every Person or Thing with Popery or Superstition at least, that doth but look towards the Establishing or Retrieving any

* Il est à noter qu'on doit apporter les Enfans, pour baptizer ; ou le Dimanche, ou les autres jours au sermon : afin que comme le Baptême est une reception solennelle en l'Eglise, il se fasse en la presence de l'Assemblée.
v. La Forme d'Administrer le Baptême.

† See The Order of Baptisme, Rubr.

of the Solemnities in God's Worship) even the *Presbyterian Directory*, in the late times of Confusion, expressly Ordains,

‘ That Baptism be not Administer’d in Private Places, or Privately, but in the Place of Publick Worship, and in the Face of the Congregation, where the People may most conveniently see and hear: which the Fra-

In the Cha.
Entituled,
Of Baptism,
p. 19.

mers of it likewise tells us was resolv’d upon *After earnest and frequent Calling upon the Name of God; and after much Consultation, not with Flesh and Blood, but with his Holy Word.* Pursuant to which Resolutions, as it should seem, we are told † that as for their Brethren in *Scotland*, no length of way, nor scarce any indisposition, can prevail with them to keep their Children from the Church; but they carry them several Miles to be baptiz’d, that it may be done in Publick: And that they thought it an inexpressible Favour, when a toleration was granted them for Private Baptism in case of great necessity. But,

See the Preface to the directory for the Publick Worship of God throughout England, Scotland and Ireland.

† Minist. of Publick Bap.
p. 43.

3. There is not only a Consent between ours and these Churches in this Particular, but the Practice of all of them is grounded upon the earliest Antiquity: For the Proof of which I shall not now trouble you with a pompous Ostentation of Authorities; tho’ I might quote to you *Justin Martyr*, *St. Athanasius*, *Gregory Nazianzen*, *Ambrose*, *Chrysostom*, * &c. with Councils † General and Provincial; but desire the above-mention’d Citation may serve instead of many: where ’twas said, ‡ That *the place where this solemn Action was perform’d, was at first unlimited; any place where there was water; as, a Pond, Lake, River, or Spring, serving turn: But that always they chose a place for Baptism as near as might be*

* Vid. Cocceii Thef. Cathol. Tom. 2. lib. 5. Art. 11. *de baptisteriis*.

† *Præ cæteris notetur præcipue*, Can. 59. *antiq. illius Conc. Constantin.* 3.

‡ Pag. 11. from *Cave’s Primitive Christianity*, Part 1. Chap. 10. Page 311.

to that of the Publick Assembly ; for 'twas seldom done (even in the very Infancy of the Church) without the Presence of the Congregation. For which Reason it was, that in Ancient Times, as we are there likewise told, * *their Baptisteria, or Fonts, as we call them, were built at first near the Church, then in the Church-Porch, to represent Baptism's being the Entrance into the Mystical Church ; and afterwards in the Church itself.* At which Places, Baptism was of Old Administer'd only on Easter and Whit-Sunday, as many Councils formerly order'd ; because (as one of them is express) at those † Solemn Times there were the most numerous Assemblies ; and by Consequence the Administration of this holy Rite would be then more for the Edification of the Church.

Where, by the way, we may observe the Rise of *Private Baptism* in the Primitive Church, together with the Reasonableness of its Allowance then : For, they reserving the Baptization of all their *Catechumens* till those two great Festivals, if any of them in the mean while happen'd to be in great danger of Persecution, as was probable in the first Ages of the Church ; ‡ *Incurfions of Barbarous Enemies, no less frequent in the succeeding Times ; present Death, by Sicknefs, or any other Means ;* they granted them the Liberty of being baptiz'd immediately, fearful lest at any time they should go out of the World depriv'd of the Benefit of this Holy Laver.

But, God be thanked, we are under no such *Apprehensions* at present ; tho' we were then, when this Custom of *Christning at Home* first got Footing amongst us ; no such Practice being heard of in the Church of England, till the late Times of our horrible Distractions. Which bare Consideration, viz. of the Means whereby this Usage was here introduc'd, might, one would think, have long since render'd it odious and abominable, to those especially, who have the Conscience

* Id. Ibid. p. 312.

† *De Catechumenis Baptizandis id statutum est, ut in Pasche vel Pentecostes solennitate, quanto majoris celebritatis major est celebritas, tanto magis ad Baptizandum veniant.* Conc. Gerund. Can. 3.

‡ *Qui enim in discrimen naufragii, hostilitatis incursum, obsidionis ambiguum, & cujuslibet corporalis egritudinis desperationem inciderint, & sibi unico credulitatis auxilio poposcerint subveniri, eodem, quo poscunt, momento temporis, expetite regenerationis premia consequantur.* Siscianus Papa ad Himerium. Tarraconensem.

still left them to abhor the *lewd* Proceedings of those Days, when *Wild Enthusiasm*, and *Blind Zeal* jostled all sober Religion almost, with God's *Solemn Worship*, out of these Three Kingdoms. But,

4thly. and Lastly, The Constitutions of our Church, which order Baptism to be *Publickly Celebrated*, do not only bear a just Correspondence with the Practice of the *Eastern*, and all the *Western Churches* now in the World, as grounded upon the earliest Antiquity: But that Antiquity has no less solid a Basis, than the firmest Reason, to support it; Three of which I shall, for the present, only hint at, leaving the farther Consideration of them, and others as obvious, to your own more serious Reflections. The

1. Of which, is, That *Publick Baptism* is more *Concil. Ge-*
for Edification. This the Primitive Church was *rund. hab.*
sensible of, as you find from the *Canon* of the *Anno 517.*
Council just now mention'd, which (with a great
number besides) orders *Baptism* to be perform'd on *Easter* and
Whit-Sundays only; because then the Congregations were
fuller. This our Church is very sensible of, in like manner,
when She orders it to be administred ordinarily
upon *Sundays*, or *Holy-days*, when the greatest Number *Rubr. 1. in*
of People are met together; that all there present may *the Office for*
be put in mind of their own Profession made to God *Publick Ba-*
in their Baptism. This the French Reformed Church *ptism.*
is highly sensible of, when, in her last Rubrick, in the Office
for *Publick Baptism*, She orders, That * the Minister, Baptizing
in the Church, speak as loud as he can, in the *Vulgar Tongue*, that all
may be edified: *En reconnoissant & reduisant en memoire, quel est*
le fruit, & l'usage de leur Baptisme. This, in a Word, all the
Churches in the World are sensible of, their Custom being
principally founded upon this Motive. But, then,

2. The very Nature and Design of *Baptism* bespeaks the Reasonableness of its being done in *Publick*: It is, as has been said, our solemn *Admission* into the Christian Church, and

* *Le tout se dit a haute voix en langue vulgaire, d'autant que le Peuple qui assiste la doit estre temoin de ce qui s'y fait a quoy est requise intelligence: & aussi afin que tous soient edifiez, en reconnoissant, &c. La Forme d'Administer le Baptisme.*

Rubr. 1. in therefore ought to be done *openly*; that as our
the Office for own instructs us, *the Congregation then present may*
Publick Ba- testify the Receiving of them that are newly baptiz'd
ptism. into the Number of Christ's Church. And,

3. We may consider, that *Baptism* contains a
Publick Profession of our Faith in Christ, by our Godfathers and
 Godmothers. Now the *Profession of our Faith*, the more pub-
 lick it is, the more agreeable is it to the Nature of *Baptism*,
 and the Constitution of the Christian Church; which is a
Visible Society, professing the Faith of Christ. And when can
 it possibly be more publick, than in the Courts of the Lord's House?
 Psal. 116. 13. The *Publick Congregation* for God's Worship,
 held by *Publick Authority*, in Places publickly set a-part for that
 purpose; when the End of Assembling there, is, the more
 solemn Celebration of God's Honour; that Devout Persons
 may, with one Mind, and one Mouth, glorify his Name to-
 gether.

Thus have I gone through all the Particulars I design'd to
 speak to: And have shewn,

I. Very briefly, The Nature of *Baptism* in general.

II. Who were the *Persons Commission'd* by our Saviour to
 baptize

III. Who ought to be baptiz'd.

IV. After what *Form*. And,

V. More at large, at what *Time*, and in what *Place*.

I should now put an End to this Discourse, but that it may
 be expected, since I have been so copious in the Defence of
Publick Baptism, that I should say somewhat by way of Ob-
 viating those *Pretences*, which have been so powerful, as to
 uphold the contrary *Practice* amongst too many of us, for some
 Years last past.

And indeed, were it not for this Reason, notwithstanding
 their Prevalency, I should have thought the best of them too
 weak and trifling, such as deserv'd rather to be pass'd over
 in Silence, or, at most, answer'd by a *Minister* in *Whispers*, as
 they are commonly urg'd to him, rather than mention'd by
 way of Confutation before such an *Auditory* as this. But,
 such as they are, they may be reduc'd to Three chiefly; either
 of the *Richer Sort*, the *Poorer*, or *Both indifferently*.

The *Richer Sort* usually preface their *Resolutions* about a *Pri-
 vate Christning*, with an Intimation of their sincere Intenti-
 ons towards the Church of England, in which they were born
 and

and bred, and resolve, by the Grace of God, to die in too :
 But, as for the Business in hand, the Child is at present *indispos'd*, and the Gossips are now in the Way, who cannot so well attend another Time ; and therefore it is convenient it should be done *immediately*, without making *any farther Trouble on't*.

To such it may easily be answer'd, If they are so well affected, as they pretend, to the *Church of England*, or rather the *Church of Christ*, let them shew their Affection, by a ready Compliance to the wholsom Injunctions of this in general, with relation to *Publick Baptism* ; and that in particular, which has provided a *Private Form*, purposely to be us'd in such Exigencies ; and satisfies them there, That *the Child*

so baptiz'd, is lawfully and sufficiently baptiz'd, and ought not to be baptiz'd again : But only desires, *in that Office*, upon Recovery, it be brought to Church afterwards, for the Reasons just mention'd ; and there

Rubr. 5th.
in that Office.

receive the high Honour of being orderly and solemnly admitted into Christ's Flock. But, to be plain, 'Tis not the Child's real Indisposition, but the unhappy Bent of the Parents too perverse Inclinations oftentimes, that make them take these Measures ; since 'tis notorious, that, of those who dar'd not venture their Infant two or three Doors to Church, in the cold Air of this City, many have speedily after sent it out some Miles in a much colder, to be taken Care of in the Country. And then, as for the Excuse of wanting those that will stand Godfathers and Godmothers, 'tis well known, that Persons of any Fashion, are not without Numbers, ambitious of paying that *Complemental Piece of Respect to them* ; (for, to our Shame be it spoken, 'tis too frequently look'd upon as no more)

On the other side, Whilst we have gloss'd, varnish'd Falshood from the Rich ; suitable to their Circumstances, we meet with *simple, naked Truth* from the Poor : What was pretended *Indisposition* in the former, is downright Shame in the latter.

Truly, tho' (they thank God) they want nothing, yet they are not so well to pass in the World, as to make a *Figure in't* ; and upon that Account, being unable to provide things *handsom enough* for their Company, and a *publick Appearance*, they don't care to be ridicul'd and laugh'd at by their Neighbours, till they can.

To which it may be reply'd, in a Word, That the *Vanity* of some in a higher Rank, ought not to be a Rule for those

in a meaner Condition; much less should the Avoiding of it be objected to them; then which, nothing can more advance their Reputation among Persons of *Prudence* and *Sobriety*; whose Censures, in such Cases, are alone to be regarded.

And, indeed, were those *Extravagant Expences* retrench'd, which are every-where too common on such Occasions, and have been condemn'd in * three late *Councils*, even by the *corrupt Church of Rome*; we should quickly find the Thoughts of most People, which are now wholly bent upon *Dress*, *Shew*, and the *Pomp* of the Business, turn'd a contrary way; and the chief Solemnity of Christnings would then lie, in having the *Religious Part* of them perform'd more *decently*, with respect to Time, Place, &c. than generally now it is.

But, 3. The *Main, Topping* Argument from both Sorts, is, That such or such Great Men have not scrupl'd to *Christen* in *Private*: Why therefore should others refuse it, who are not nigh so much *Dignify'd*, nor *Distinguish'd*?

To this I answer, Lastly, When those *Eminent Persons* declin'd their Rule, they did it with Reason, or without.

If without, Then their Example ought no more to be a Guide to others, than the unwarrantable Actions of a Superior Magistrate in any Corporation, should be propos'd to the Imitation of an Inferior one: For, however they may both, by the Connivance of the Higher Powers, or any other way, escape the Punishment due to them for the Breach of the Laws of their Country; yet there is a Court of Conscience in each of their Breasts, that will not acquit them here, and a Sentence to be awarded them by the highest Tribunal hereafter.

If they did it with Reason, Then it must be presum'd 'twas for the same that made *Moses* connive at some Irregularities in the *Jews*; viz. the *Hardness of their Hearts*, in hopes to bring them, by this Means, at length, to an entire Conformity. For, to that deplorable Condition are we arriv'd, through a complicated Degeneracy of Principles and Manners, peculiar to this Age, that unless a *Clergy-man* will now and then submit to undue Compliances of this nature, some *proud, peevish Persons* there are, who shall make it their whole Study and Endeavour (by spreading about malicious *Innuendo's*, and palpable *Untruths*, with other indirect Methods) to render his *Preaching*,

* Conc. Colon. Decr. 15. Conc. Mogunt. Can. XVI. Conc. Mediol. quintum. cap. *Quæ ad Baptismum pertinent.*

Prayers, Administration of the other Sacrament, his whole Ministry ineffectual. But, God be thanked, this is but the Case of a few; the rest of the Laity generally standing out upon no other Ground, than the Strength of that bad Custom to the contrary, which many wish heartily were broke, but only are shy, each of them, of first attempting it.

Far be it therefore from me, to apply to the Present State of our Church, with relation to this Affair, what was said, by one of the * *Councils* last mention'd, of the *Clergy and Laity* in the *Diocese of Cologne*, where *Private Baptism* began to make Head: *Detestanda est non minus Laicorum superbia, quam Pastorum eis obsequentium adulatio, qui contemptâ Ecclesiâ proles suas volunt in domibus suis baptizari, & eo Baptismi aquam deferri.* No, it is not owing to the *base Easiness* of our *Clergy*, in making Concessions of this nature; nor to the *Pride* of most of our *Laity*, (tho' some must be thought to make it a *piece of State* †) that they have had a long while, and still have in too many places, their Children generally *Christ'ned at Home*, but to the great difficulty of breaking a *Custom*; which, as it began in a *very ill Time*, and has more *unhappily* prevail'd ever since; so it will be *most dismal* in its Consequences, if the Observation of a great ‡ *Doctor* in our Church holds good, That *there is not a more ready way to root out Christianity it self among us, than (thus) to destroy the Solemnities of God's Worship.*

However therefore some Men, when press'd with Arguments of this kind from the Pulpit, or otherwise, are apt to stifle or shuffle them off, with crying out in general of a *Holy Life, a Holy Life*, as the only *Stable Support* of Christianity. Sure I am (tho' what they say is true) yet they are never like to be any great Pillars of it, who are deaf to all Informations about, and consequently neglect all the Means of Practice, amongst which, a *due Administration* of God's *Holy Sacraments* has still been reckon'd none of the least.

The *Application* from all, which has been said, is this, in short; That since there is no Shadow of Reason for *Private Baptism*, and no Bar against bringing this *Ancient*, this *Catho-*

* Conc. Colon. Anno 1549. V. *Inter Censuras & decreta lata pro abusum & vitiorum ad Synodi judicium perlatorum emendatione*, Decr. 15.

† *Private Baptism, &c. is since become a Mark of Vanity, and a piece of Affected State.* Burnet's Hist. Reform. Abridged, Lib. 2. p. 63.

‡ Dr. Sherlock's Relig. Assemb. Part 2. ch. 4. pag. 193.

tick, this Religious, this almost necessary Practice of Baptizing in Publick, into a greater Esteem amongst us, than the pitiful Plea of a prevailing Custom to the contrary, which might be easily overthrown by the Encouragement, and especially the Example of Rich Men; whom their Meaner Neighbours would as readily follow in Religious Usages, as in Civil Fashions. I say, since there is no other Bar against Publick Baptism, but this pitiful Plea, it may be worth while for all Persons of Character and Station to consider, whether, as God has bestow'd on them more distinguishing Marks of his Favour, than others round about them, they ought not (were it only by way of Gratitude) to signalize themselves more especially, and become forwarder Instances in promoting his Glory all the ways imaginable: A fair Opportunity of doing which, in no small measure, they have in the Matter before us, which tends so much, as we have seen, to the Good of his Church, in the Edification of particular Christians, and (which is little thought on) the Welfare of their own Souls too.

For, Whereas they beseech God every Lord's-
See the Prayer Day, and Holy-Day, that he would give his Grace
for Christ's to all Bishops and Curates, that they Rightly and
Church Mili- Duly Administer his Holy Sacrament; if in this,
tant, in the as well as other Petitions, their Hearts go along
Communion- with their Lips, and their Endeavours with
Service. both; if they do not frustrate this his Grace
 here, by discouraging his Ministers in a faith-
 ful Discharge of their Office, they may then expect to be at
 length Partakers with him in Everlasting Glory hereafter.

Now, Consider we, what has been said, and God Almighty
 give every one of us a right Judgment in this particular, as well
 as in all other Matters; That, as he hath left
 Church- in his Church but two Sacraments, as Outward
 Catechism. and Visible Signs of his Inward and Spiritual Grace,
 we may none of us, in the Great Day of Visita-
 tion, be found among those, who have either scandalously neg-
 lected the one, or budd'd up the other in a Corner.

Now, to the Individual and Ever-blessed Trinity, Three
 Persons, but One Glorious, Almighty Lord God, be ascrib-
 ed, as is most due, by us, and his People every-where,
 all possible Adoration, Honour and Glory,

As it was in the Beginning, is now, and ever shall be, World
 without End. Amen.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

To the Reader,

SINCE the former Impression of this *Sermon*, I met with a Letter of our *Right Reverend Diocesan's*, containing the substance of a Conference with his Clergy concerning the Subject Matter thereof; wherein His Lordship hath so fully explained and vindicated the Rule of the *Church of England* as to that Particular, and prescribed such effectual Methods for recovering the Practice of it within our *Communion*, (which His Lordship was pleased to move again as his avowed Sense in another later Conference with his City-Clergy) That 'tis thought fit, towards the more successful retrieving in this City and Kingdom the most approved Usage in the Catholick Church of *Baptizing publickly*, to subjoin it to this Second Edition, together with the concurrent Judgments of the *Most Reverend and Right Reverend Fathers in God*,

*The Lord
Bishop of
London.*

*In the Ora-
tory at St.
Pauls, May
17th last.*

Dr. Tillotson, late Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*,
Dr. Kidder, Lord Bishop of *Bath and Wells*,
Dr. Stratford, Lord Bishop of *Chester*,
Dr. Gardiner, Lord Bishop of *Lincoln*,
Dr. Williams, Lord Bishop of *Chichester*,

And other Right Reverend Fathers of our present Church, who have earnestly recommended the diligent use of it both to the Clergy and Laity in their Visitation *Charges, Advices, Sermons, &c.* since that time; which be pleased to peruse in the order and manner as they were published.

Henry

Henry Lord Bishop of London's Judgment concerning Publick Baptism.

Good Brother,

THE First Conference we had was concerning * *Baptism*, for the performance of which, you are directed by 29 and 30, 69 and 70 *Canons*, and the *Rubricks* contained in the Office for the Administration of *Baptism*: And to perswade us the more earnestly and effectually to prosecute this, we consider'd,

1. Of the great Use and Expedience *Publick Baptism* was in the Church.
2. What might be the best Means to recover the *shameful* Difuse of it.

I. The great Use and Expedience did appear from the several Advantages the Church receives by *Publick Baptism*, which are all lost in Private.

1. There are the joint Prayers of the Congregation to give a Blessing to that Holy Performance.

2. There is an occasion given to the People to reflect upon their own Promise, both which are Exercises of Mutual Charity.

3. It makes us not to be ashamed of our Vow of Christianity. And

Lastly, It gives that Solemnity which is due to so great a *Sacrament*, and from which a greater awe and regard is contracted upon the Minds of Men, who are in a great measure moved by the outward appearance, and for the want of which being *huddled* up in *private*, I fear I may but too truly say it is grown into *contempt* among us.

That which adds great weight to confirm these Reasons, is the constant and universal Practice of the Church in all Ages; which, however different in the Manner, was attended with two Circumstances, a High Reverence to the Sacredness of the Institution, and a Solemn and Publick Performance: Witness the Primitive Usage in the Burying-place of their Martyrs, where their Assemblies were then held, and afterwards their

* *V. Episcopalia*, or Letters of the most Reverend Father in God, Henry Lord Bishop of London, to the Clergy of his Diocese. Printed 1686. Letter I. Sect. *Baptism*.

Magnificent Baptisteries, the remains of which are to be seen in some Cities to this day. It would be to little purpose to quote either Councils or Fathers for this, when there is not a Church to this Hour, that doth not appoint as *Publick* an *Administration* as its Condition will allow of. And if any come shorter of this decent Observation than another (except some *wild Christians*) it is the Church of *Rome*, which by Superstition hath defaced the Beauty of it.

II. The way therefore to recover this *decent* and *most useful* Practice, and to restore the Church to its *Just* Discipline, is, earnestly to lay before those who are committed to our care, not only the *reasonableness* of their *complying*, but likewise the *great Obligation* that lies upon us, especially in *obedience* to so *Just* a *Command*. So that at the least, if they will not *bring their Children* into the *Congregation* (supposing they have Health to bear it) we ought to *refuse* the *Registering* of them.

Nicholas Lord Bishop of Chester's.

IN the next place * you promised, *To give your faithful diligence so to Minister the Sacraments and Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as the Church and Realm hath received the same, according to the Commandment of God; that is, as God hath prescribed in the Holy Scriptures.*

As to the Sacrament of *Baptism*, I shall at present only put you in mind of some few Things, which are either expressly or implicitly required in the *Rubricks*.

First, Let your People know, That *Baptism* being the *Solemn Admission* of a Person into the *Publick Society* of *Christians*, it is very *unbecoming* its *Nature* and *Design*, to have it *Administred* in *private*. *Admonish* them therefore to *bring their Children* to be *Baptiz'd* in the *publick Congregation*, lest by their refusing so to do, *Christ* should reckon them in the number of those, who are *ashamed* of him and his *Religion* before Men.

Rubrick before private Baptism.

Secondly, *Admonish* your People, That it is most convenient, That *Baptism* should not be *Administred*, but upon *Sundays* and *Holy-days*, when the greatest number of People come together; be-

Rubrick before publick Baptism.

* See his *Charge* in his *Primary Visitation* at *Chester*, May 5. 1691. pag. 11, 12.

cause

cause in the *Baptism of Infants*, every Man present may be put in remembrance of his own Profession, made to God in his *Baptism*. Exhort them therefore to attend diligently throughout the whole Administration, to reflect upon their past Lives, and to consider how far they have kept, and wherein they have broken their Baptismal Vow.

Richard Lord Bishop of Bath and Well's.

Fifthly, You are also to * *Administer the Sacraments* as is appointed by the Church.

Baptism is the Sacrament of Initiation: By this we are entered into the Church: You are to take care (as directed in the *Rubrick*) that this be done in the Church in the face of the Congregation. You are also to explain in your *Sermons* the Nature of this Sacrament; and the Grounds of Infant-Baptism, and often to explain the Baptismal Vow, and call on your People to reflect upon it, and to consider the Obligation that ariseth thence to a Life of Vertue and Religion.

I have told you what you are to do for the more successful discharge of your Holy Office.

John Lord Arch-bishop of Canterbury's.

I Proceed to the next *Particular*, wherein the † good Education of Children doth consist; namely,

II. *In bringing them to be baptized and admitted Members of Christ's Church* at the times appointed or accustomed in the National Church of which the Parents are Members. I mean, to bring them to the Church to be there publicly initiated, and solemnly admitted by *Baptism*. And this the Rules of the Church of England do strictly enjoin, unless the Child be in danger of Death: And in that Case only it is allowed to administer *Baptism privately*, and in a Summary way, without performing the whole Office. But then if the Child live, it is order'd that it shall be brought to the Church, where the remainder of the Office is to be solemnly performed.

* See his *Charge to the Clergy of his Diocese*, at his *Primary Visitation* begun at Axbridge, June 2. 1692. pag. 19, 24.

† See *Six Sermons* printed 1694. Sermon 3d. concerning Education of Children, pag. 112, 113, 114.

I know that of late Years, since our unhappy *Confusions*, this *Sacrament* hath very frequently been *administred* in *private*. And *Ministers* have been in a manner, and to avoid the greater mischief of *Separation*, necessitated to comply with the *Obstinacy* of the greater and more powerful of their *Parishioners*: Who for their *Ease*, or *Humour*, or for the *convenience* of a more pompous *Christening*, will either have their *Children* baptized at *Home* by their *Minister*; or if he refuse, will get some other *Minister* to do it: Which is very irregular.

Now I would entreat such Persons calmly to consider how contrary to *Reason*, and the plain *Design* of the *Institution* of this *Sacrament*, this *perverse Custom*, and their *obstinate Resolution* in it, is. For is there any *Civil Society* or *Corporation*, into which Persons are admitted without some kind of *Solemnity*? And is the *Privilege* of being admitted *Members* of the *Christian Church*, and *Heirs* of the great and glorious *Promises* and *Blessings* of the *New Covenant* of the *Gospel* less *Considerable*, and fit to be conferr'd with less *Solemnity*? I speak to *Christians*, and they who are so in good earnest will, without my using more words about it, consider what I say in this Particular.

James Lord Bishop of Lincoln's.

BUT---I am sure they cannot * excuse themselves in neglecting, omitting, or altering any part of the *Publick Offices*--- They ought at least to perform the *Offices* as they are directed and prescribed, for nothing less than this can Answer their *Subscription*, which will remain in the *Bishop's Custody* as a *Witness* of their *Insincerity*.

This is to be understood not only of the *Offices* of *Morning* and *Evening Prayer*--- but also all *Occasional Offices*, the *Administration* of the *Sacraments* of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*--- These ought to be performed *seriously*, *solemnly*, and *deliberately*, and in the *Expressions* and *Order* in which they are directed, which can only justify the *Conformity* which you have promised.

As to one of those *Offices*, that of *Publick Baptism* of *Infants*, I must advise you to use your utmost endeavour to prevail with your *Parishioners* to bring their *Children* to *Church* to

* See His *Advice* to the *Clergy* of the *Diocese* of *Lincoln*, in order to his *Primary Visitation*, 1697. p. 12, 13, 20, 21.

be Baptiz'd, and not feign Pretences for having them Baptiz'd at their own Houses : Or if there be a real Danger, and that Sickness, or other need compels them so to do, if the Child live, you must not fail to admonish them, that it is *expedient* (as the *Rubrick* directs) to bring the Child to Church afterwards. This is a part of that Conformity to the *Liturgy* of the Church of England, to which you have subscribed. Again : In another place

I must charge upon you, That you deliver faithfully the whole Law of Christ by which the Church is to be *Instructed, Edified, and Governed, &c.*

These things you should *Preach and Exhort*, and thereby shew your selves faithful to your Lord and Master, who has Ordained these Two *Sacraments* to be *perpetually* used and administered in the Church until his coming again. For which purpose, as there is in every Church a *Font* for *Baptism*, so there is a part of the Church, very convenient and proper, and generally fitted and prepared for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper, which we call the *Chancel*.

John Lord Bishop of Chichester's.

AND accordingly as they are thus joined in * Neighbourhood by Situation, and in an Ecclesiastical Society by a Parochial Union : So there are Acts of Religion and Worship, which as of such Society they are to join and communicate in : And that under a general Character, is what we call *Publick Worship*, consisting in Prayers, Exhortations and Instructions, Psalms, and *Sacraments*. And since these are the publick Testimonies of Communion, and what we are required by the Divine Command to Communicate in, how much are they to blame that live in the neglect of these or any of these ?

And now I am upon this Argument, I must mind you of a *Solemn Ordinance* of our Religion, that if we respect the Use and End of it, should be first treated of, and that is, *Baptism*. An Ordinance indeed not neglected : For who is there amongst us that is not willing and forward to have his Children thereby matriculated and admitted into the Church of God ? But

* See his *Sermon* preach'd at St. Mildred's Poultry, Jan. 3. 1697. upon his leaving that Parish, pag. 7, 10, 11,

If we consider how 'tis generally Celebrated in *private*, in the Corner of a Room, in the presence of scarce so many as will entitle the Company to a Congregation: It is far from being a Solemnity; or from being treated as a Divine Institution: Far from answering the End of that Institution: For what is the End of that Ordinance, but to *initiate* the Person into the Church of Christ, and to entitle him to the Privileges of it? And where is that Society that he is admitted to? Is it not when assembled after the most solemn and conspicuous manner for the Worship of God, and for the testifying of their Communion in it? And where is the Profession to be made before such Admission, where the Stipulation to be given, where the Promise to undertake the Duties of a Christian, but where the Church is? And how can all this be done in Confusion and Precipitance, without any timely Notice or Preparation, without such an Assembly as the Nature of the thing, as well as the Order of the Church, in consequence of it, doth require? The Ordinance is certainly Publick, Publick in the Nature and End of it, and such ought the Celebration of it to be: And the Neglect of such a Celebration is the less excusable, because it is so easily remedied. But I come not here so much to Reprove as to Exhort; and do no farther tax the Neglect of such, than as it may serve to awaken them that are guilty of it, to a sense of their Duty. O what an Honour would it be to Almighty God! What a Service to our Religion! What a means to sweeten our Tempers, and to treat each other with Fairness and Simplicity, if as we are Men made of one blood, as we are Christians, and Redeemed by the Blood of one common Saviour, so we could all come to join in the same Worship.

I might to the Arguments laid down, offer in this place the constant * Usage of the Church of Zurich, (the Translation of whose Liturgy is † recommended to the English Reader by six of our much-esteem'd Prelates) which as we are inform'd, Orders,

1. That Baptism never be administered in any Private House, but always in the Church or Chapel of the Parish.

* *Liturgia Tigurina*, pag. 90.

† We do approve of this as a Work that may be of very good Satisfaction and Use. *H. London, W. Cov. and Lich. H. Bangor, J. Norwich, R. Ciceſt. R. Petrib.*

2. That

2. That Children ought to be *baptized* when there is *Publick Service of Prayer and Sermon*, and never else, unless a Child be dangerously Sick; then the *Sureties* and *Relations* are to meet in the Church, and to bring the Children thither, where the Minister (having read those Prayers before-mentioned) *Christereth* them.

I might press also with the *Articles* to be Enquired of, and Answer'd unto by the *Church-Warden* and *Sworn-Men* at Ecclesiastical Visitations; such are,

1. Is there a *decent Font* of Stone in your Church with a Cover?

2. Doth your Minister Baptize *Publickly only* in the *Font*?

But the Arguments newly mention'd (each of which hath its Weight) are of Force sufficient to conclude the *Laity* as well as *Clergy* of our Communion, who cannot any of them, without a palpable derogation to their own Characters, refuse to comply with the unanswerable Reasons so advantageously urged by those **GREAT NAMES**.

Yet, should these Papers miss of their pious Aim, and not compass our Church's design of an Uniform and Universal Obedience to her Injunctions: Should some wilful Persons thro' the degenerate Iniquity of our times, stand out still in some places against the most cogent and powerful Motives which here jointly make a fresh vigorous Effort for retrieving the Laudable and almost Necessary Use of *Publick Baptism* amongst us.

These valuable **AUTHORITIES** will do thus much Good in the Church however. They must *Countenance* at least the Persons who conscientiously and prudently endeavour the Observation of their Rule, if not *Rebuke* those who neglect or pervert it.

Sion College, June

19. 1699.

P. S.

SERMONS Publish'd by the Reverend Mr. *Stubs*.

OF Publick Baptism; Of Confirmation; Of Occasional Communion; Of the Hopes of a Resurrection; On the 29th of May; On the 31st of November before the Lord Mayor; Of Religious Loyalty and Religious Charity; Of God's Dominion over the Seas, and the Seamen's Duty; Of Peace upon Earth, the Gift of God, and Good-Will to one another; the Duty of Men.

F I N I S